

## Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO CITY 9324

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, MX  
SUBJ: ECHEVERRIA'S TURN-AROUND ON BRACERO QUESTION

REF: MEXICO'S 9057 AND 9099

1. SUMMARY: PRES. ECHEVERRIA'S SURPRISE DECISION TO REVERSE HIS COURSE ON THE BRACERO ISSUE AND ACCEPT PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR DISCOURAGING ILLEGAL MIGRATION CAME AS A PAINFUL SHOCK TO HIS PRIMARY BRACERO EXPERT AT THE FOREIGN SECRETARIAT. THE POLICY SWITCH WAS APPARENTLY SOLD TO LEA BY "OUTSIDERS" FROM THE MEXICAN ACADEMIC COMMUNITY, IN LEAGUE WITH ECHEVERRIA'S OWN YOUTHFUL ADVISORS, AND IS CONSONANT WITH CURRENT GOM PLANS TO CHANNEL MAJOR NEW TAX RESOURCES INTO THE NEGLECTED RURAL SECTOR. HOWEVER, IT PROBABLY REPRESENTS ONLY A TEMPORARY RESPITE FOR US FROM PRESSURES TO ENSURE RIGHTS OF MEXICANS NOW WORKING IN US. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBOFF SOUGHT OUT FONSEC DEPUTY LEGAL ADVISOR, LIC. JUAN BARONA LOBATO, IN HOPE HE MIGHT SHED SOME LIGHT ON PRES. ECHEVERRIA'S UNEXPECTED POLICY SWITCH ON BRACERO ISSUE. LIC. BARONA HAS SPENT BETTER PART OF HIS 29 YEARS OF GOVERNMENT SERVICE ON THIS VERY QUESTION AND HAS BEEN A REGULAR THORN IN OUR FLESH RECENTLY THANKS TO HIS MASTERY OF SUBJECT MATTER AND ABLE ADVOCACY OF MEXICAN VIEWPOINT

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ON ILLEGALS.

3. BARONA DISPLAYED OBVIOUS CHAGRIN AND DEEP DISAPPOINTMENT OVER TURN OF EVENTS DURING PRESIDENTIAL VISIT. HE SHOWED EMBOFF A SUCCINCT POSITION PAPER HE HAD PREPARED FOR ECHEVERRIA'S USE IN DISCUSSING BRACERO QUESTION WITH PRESIDENT FORD, WHICH INCLUDED OUTLINE OF US POLITICAL IMPEDIMENTS TO A NEW AGREEMENT, TALKING POINTS DESIGNED TO SHOW WHAT MEXICO WAS DOING TO STEM ILLEGAL MIGRATION, AND AN AIDE MEMOIRE CONTAINING FOUR POINTS ON WHICH HE HOPED ECHEVERRIA MIGHT SEEK US AGREEMENT.

4. BARONA'S FOUR POINTS -- WHICH HE PROVIDED TO EMBOFF IN STRICTEST CONFIDENCE -- WERE AS FOLLOWS:

A. ESTABLISHMENT OF PERMANENT BINATIONAL COMMISSION, SIMILAR TO EXISTING IBWC, TO CONDUCT CONTINUING STUDY OF MIGRATORY FLOW IN BOTH DIRECTIONS, EXCHANGE INFORMATION, AND RECOMMEND CORRECTIVE MEASURES.

B. ADJUSTMENT OF STATUS OF ILLEGALS NOW RESIDING IN US WITH ASSURANCES THAT APPLICANTS FOR CHANGE OF STATUS WOULD NOT BE DEPORTED OR HARRASSED.

C. MEETING OF US AND MEXICAN OFFICIALS BEFORE END OF 1974 TO EXCHANGE VIEWS AND DRAFT PROPOSALS FOR "FEASIBLE AND REALISTIC" ACTION.

D. MEETINGS BETWEEN LABOR LEADERS OF BOTH COUNTRIES TO OVERCOME PRESENT LACK OF COMMUNICATION AND SEEK FORMULAS FOR UNDERSTANDING AND COOPERATION (RESPECTIVE GOVERNMENTS WOULD MERELY FACILITATE SUCH MEETINGS).

5. TOGETHER WITH FONSEC RABASA, BARONA WAS SUMMONED TO LOS PINOS TO DISCUSS HIS POSITION PAPER WITH ECHEVERRIA SHORTLY BEFORE LATTER'S DEPARTURE FOR BORDER. TO HIS DISMAY, OTHER MEXICAN "EXPERTS" WERE ALSO SUMMONED TO SESSION, APPARENTLY INCLUDING PROF. JORGE BUSTAMANTE OF COLEGIO DE MEXICO WHOSE THEORY IS THAT 1951 BRACERO AGREEMENT WAS HIGHLY DISADVANTAGEOUS TO MEXICO AND THAT MEXICO WOULD DO BETTER TO SOLVE PROBLEM UNILATERALLY BY STABILIZING FARM

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POPULATION ON MEXICAN LANDS (SEE MEXICO 9099). BARONA SAID HIS OWN POSITION PAPER WAS IGNORED, HE WAS GIVEN NO CHANCE TO REFUTE OUTSIDERS' ARGUMENTS, AND LATTER GROUP CARRIED THE DAY WITH ECHEVERRIA AND HIS AIDES (WITH WHOM, BARON SAID, BUSTAMANTE SEEMED TO BE QUITE THICK).

6. EXPERIENCE AT LOS PINOS AND OUTCOME OF PRESIDENTIAL MEETINGS LEFT VETERAN BUREAUCRAT BARONA IN MOOD OF DEEP

DESPAIR, SERIOUSLY CONTEMPLATING EARLY RETIREMENT. HE WAS PARTICULARLY DISTRESSED AT ECHEVERRIA'S "DEFINITIVE" ABANDONMENT OF FORMAL AGREEMENT ON BRACEROS, SINCE HE BELIEVES ANY LONG-TERM SOLUTION TO MIGRANT PROBLEM WILL REQUIRE SOME SORT OF BILATERAL COMMITMENT. MOREOVER, HE BELIEVES BUSTAMENTE PRESCRIPTION IS DOOMED TO FAILURE, SINCE ARID LANDS SOUTH OF BORDER WILL NOT SUPPORT LARGE-SCALE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT WHICH HE SAYS HIS RIVAL ENVISAGES THERE.

7. FOR TIME BEING, BARONS IS RESIGNED TO SEEKING MEANS OF COMPLYING WITH RABASA'S LATEST MANDATE TO HIM TO COME UP WITH "SOMETHING, ANYTHING" TO IMPLEMENT ECHEVERRIA COMMITMENTS AND SECURE IMPROVED TREATMENT OF MEXICAN MIGRANTS IN US. HE IS TOYING WITH IDEA OF BEEFING UP MEXICAN CONSULAR STAFF IN US AND GREATLY BROADENING THEIR PROTECTIVE FUNCTION ON BEHALF OF ILLEGALS, BUT HE ADMITS HE HASN'T YET FOUND A SATISFACTORY FORMULA AND HIS HEART IS NOT IN THE TASK. PRIVATELY, BARONA STILL HOPES THAT PRESIDENT FORD'S "GENTLEMANLY AGREEMENT" TO RESUSCITATE SEPARATE INTER-MINISTERIAL COMMISSIONS CAN SOMEHOW BE TURNED TOWARD A PERMANENT BINATIONAL BORDER COMMISSION.

8. COMMENT: IT IS CLEAR TO US, GIVEN PRESENT DO-IT-YOURSELF TRENDS IN MEXICAN POLITICS GENERALLY, THAT BARONA LOBATO'S OLD-SCHOOL APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM SIMPLY LOST ITS APPEAL TO PRES. ECHEVERRIA, WHOSE HUNGER FOR NEW IDEAS AND YOUTHFUL INNOVATION KNOWS NO BOUNDS. THAT BARONA'S APPROACH IS OUT OF STEP WITH THE TIMES BECAME ALL THE MORE APPARENT THIS WEEK, AS TREASURY SECRETARY LOPEZ PORTILLO DEFENDED GOM'S PAINFUL NEW TAX PROPOSALS IN TERMS OF NEED TO CHANNEL RESOURCES INTO AN EMERGENCY DEVELOPMENT PLAN TO RESCUE CAMPESINOS FROM POVERTY AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT.

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9. ECHEVERRIA'S READINESS TO DISMISS THE VIEWS AND ARGUMENTS OF FONSEC EXPERTS ON SUCH KEY ISSUE, AND AT SUCH A CRITICAL MOMENT, ALSO UNDERSCORES HIS INCREASING IMPATIENCE WITH MINISTERIAL BUREAUCRACY AND HIS GROWING RELIANCE UPON HIS OWN YOUTHFUL STAFF AT PRESIDENCY AND OTHER BRIGHT OUTSIDERS HE HAS CULTIVATED. ON THE POLITICAL SCENE GENERALLY, THIS TENDENCY IS PRODUCING A WELCOME FLEXIBILITY ALONG WITH A FREQUENTLY ANNOYING UNPREDICTABILITY.

10. FROM US STANDPOINT, BARONA'S MISFORTUNE REPRESENTS AT LEAST A TEMPORARY RESPITE FROM PRESSURES FOR A NEW BRACERO PROGRAM. HOWEVER, ECHEVERRIA'S WAVE OF THE HAND DID NOT ELIMINATE ROOT PROBLEMS OF ILLEGAL MIGRATION, AND WE MAY EXPECT TO HEAR MUCH MORE IN CONNECTION WITH HIS

PRIMISE TO DEFEND BASIC RIGHTS OF ALL MEXICANS IN US,  
LEGALLY OR ILLEGALLY.

11. LIC. BARONA LOBATO, AS SOURCE OF ABOVE, MUST BE  
CAREFULLY PROTECTED FOR OBVIOUS REASONS.

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## Message Attributes

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